

REMARKS

Allowable Subject Matter

At page 3 of the Detailed Action the Examiner has indicated that claims 5 to 7 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 USC 112. Applicants have so rewritten the claims, and have rewritten them in independent form. Applicants respectfully request allowance of the claims.

Amendment of claims 5 – 7 to independent form brings the total number of independent claims presented in the application to 4. Applicants submit herewith a check including \$84 in payment of the excess claim fee for one independent claim.

Amendment of the Specification

The amendment of the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 3, of the specification is entered to help conform the application to US practice. Support for the amendment is found at page 1, lines 29 – 31, and elsewhere throughout the specification. No new matter is added by the amendment. Applicants respectfully request entry of the amendment.

The Rejection of Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

At page 2 of the Detailed Action the Examiner has rejected Claims 1 and 4 under 35 USC § 112 as indefinite. Applicants hereby amend claims 1 and 4 accordingly. No new matter is added by the amendment. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection.

The Rejection of Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

At pages 2 - 3 of the Detailed Action the Examiner has rejected Claims 1 – 4 and 6 under 35 USC § 102(b) as assertedly anticipated by Liu, US patent

5,774,917. To anticipate a claim, a single reference must disclose each and every one of the limitations of the claim. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 – 4 and 6 are neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by Liu or any other cited reference. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection.

Claims 1 - 4

Claims 1 – 4 are drawn to an inflatable support for providing pressure relief, the inflatable support comprising at least one inflatable transverse cell extending transversely of the support, each at least one transverse cell having outermost opposite ends and within each said outermost opposite end at least one internal cell, the at least one internal cell at a higher pressure than the transverse cell and having a lower height than the transverse cell, such that the whole of an upper surface of the transverse cell provides pressure relief.

Liu discloses no such support. Liu discloses a turn mattress comprising a plurality of inflatable sacs, each sac divided into halves, the halves alternatively inflated or deflated for turning a patient ridden on the mattress. Each sac half comprises a constantly-inflated restoring air bag for preventing the patient from slipping away from the mattress.

Liu neither teaches nor suggests that internal cells such as those claimed by Applicants are at a higher pressure than the transverse cell and have a lower height than the transverse cell, such that the whole of an upper surface of the transverse cell provides pressure relief. Liu is entirely silent on the relative pressures within the restoring air bags and the inflatable sacs, and provides no motivation for providing internal cells of lower height and higher pressure than the transverse cell, such that the whole of the upper surface of the transverse cell provides pressure relief.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1 – 4.

Claim 6

Liu fails to either anticipate or render obvious claim 6 for the reasons stated above in regard to claims 1 – 4.

In addition, claim 6 recites that the internal cells at each opposite end of the transverse cell are connected by a common manifold and inflated jointly by that manifold. Liu neither discloses nor suggests such a manifold. As shown, for example, in Figure 2 of Liu, Liu teaches that each of the restoring bags on one side or the other may be connected to a common manifold, to facilitate, for example, the turning of patients. Restoring bags at opposing ends of a single inflatable sac are not connected by a common manifold.

Applicants respectfully request the reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 6.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that they have fully responded to the Examiner's concerns and that the claims are now in condition for immediate allowance. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and immediate allowance of the claims.

Please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment in any fee required for this response to Deposit Account No. 02-4270.

Applicant requests that any questions concerning this matter be directed to the undersigned at (212) 895-2906.

I certify that this paper, together with any documents referred to as attached or enclosed, are being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to the Commissioner of Patents, Washington, DC 20231.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 10 March 2005



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